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**MARICOPA ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS**  
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

**NORTH VALLEY FOCUS GROUP RESULTS**

The Maricopa Association of Governments (MAG) is developing a new Regional Transportation Plan for the MAG region. As part of this effort, MAG conducted a series of focus groups to identify and document transportation issues and concerns. The focus groups were held throughout the Valley to capture ideas from geographically and ethnically diverse groups of participants. The findings will assist MAG in identifying regional values, goals, and objectives that will guide the development of the Regional Transportation Plan.

The format of the Focus Groups included an opportunity for interactive discussion among participants, as well as a voting exercise that provided insight on priorities. To help structure the process, the discussions were organized into five topics areas. The topics included:

- ✕ Demographic and Social Change;
- ✕ The New Economy;
- ✕ Environmental and Resource Issues;
- ✕ Land Use and Urban Development; and
- ✕ Transportation and Technology.

Participants were encouraged to provide their own issues and concerns that related to each topic, both individually and in a round-table discussion. The responses received were documented in essentially a “verbatim” format so that the message intended by the participant was accurately conveyed.

The results of the **North Valley Focus Group** are attached. This material has been divided into three parts as follows:



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**Part I. Key Focus Group Issues:** In Part I, the key issues identified at the North Valley Focus Group are listed by topic area. These issues are those voted by the participants to be the top two concerns in each topic area. Due to ties, certain topics may have more than two issues listed.

**Part II. Comprehensive Listing of Participant Issues:** In Part II, all the issues identified by the individual participants are listed. These issues have been grouped by topic area.

**Part III. Roundtable Discussion Comments:** In Part III, the results from a roundtable discussion are listed. These comments were recorded when all the focus group attendees participated in a general discussion of issues prior to voting on the top issues in each topic area.

If you have any questions or comments on the focus group process or the attached results, please contact Roger Herzog, MAG, at 602-254-6300 or [rherzog@mag.maricopa.gov](mailto:rherzog@mag.maricopa.gov).



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## NORTH VALLEY FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

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### PART I. KEY FOCUS GROUP ISSUES

The participants of the North Valley Focus Group were given the opportunity to vote on their top two issues in each of the five topic areas. The two issues receiving the most votes are listed under each topic. Due to ties, certain topics may have more than two issues listed.

#### *DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE PRIMARY ISSUES*

- x Plan surface transportation system with more advance of development.
- x Healthcare needs will change – very few medical services available in North Valley.

#### *THE NEW ECONOMY PRIMARY ISSUES*

- x Design green neighborhoods where work school and amenities are within close proximity to homes.
- x Encourage employment/residential concurrent.

#### *ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES PRIMARY ISSUES*

- x New Transportation corridors are delayed by EAs, EISs, etc.
- x Necessity to develop via a well-balanced plan according to need for open space, economics, social change, equal work force, etc.

#### *LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT PRIMARY ISSUES*

- x Infrastructure should be planned for the ultimate buildout.
- x Planning done from the transit villages outward.



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## PART I. KEY FOCUS GROUP ISSUES (CONTINUED)

### *TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY PRIMARY ISSUES*

- x Complete Loop 303 before needed.
- x Design with safety in priority status; the “lottery” is not a reasonable standard.

## PART II. COMPREHENSIVE LISTING OF PARTICIPANT ISSUES

The following is a comprehensive listing of the issues that individual participants of the North Valley Focus Group identified as their concerns under each topic.

### DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE ISSUES

- x There will be more people! Double in 2040!
- x Increase is driven by retired citizens.
- x Increase is driven by service industry to retired citizens.
- x Increase is driven by tourism.
- x Increase is driven by R&D Industry.
- x Increase is driven by young families having more children.
- x North Valley not currently economically diverse – very little affordable housing.
- x Resistance to change- Phoenicians continue to move North to “escape” and may resist mass transit, economic diversification, etc.
- x Tax revenues adequate for infrastructure financing.
- x Plan system to encourage economic/employment development.



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**DEMOGRAPHIC AND SOCIAL CHANGE ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

- x Tax revenue from baby boomer population bulge will decrease and baby boomer population will require more social services and not as much funding for transportation.
- x Transportation needs will increase from minority neighborhoods to employment centers.
- x In Arizona, the Hispanic population is growing substantially.
- x People are living longer.
- x Changes are occurring at a higher rate than transportation – Need to increase the pace of expanded transportation.
- x Current transportation cannot accommodate social and population change and growth – need for North Valley Public Transit.
- x Without proper transportation solutions at same rate as growth, valuable work force will not be attracted to accommodate economic growth.
- x Public services need to be expanded and decentralized from downtown locations to accommodate regional (North Valley & South Valley) demographic & social changes.
- x Develop regional transit system.
- x Work force development for Region.
- x Regional mixed use plan for land use.
- x Create Cultural support facility.
- x In 20 years there may be over 70 million senior citizens, with the biggest sub-group being 85 years plus.
- x Neighborhood Planning Stats should include “one stop shopping” for services (i.e., recreation, social).
- x With an increase in minority population most likely there will be a bigger need for social services at neighborhood level.
- x Address youths’ and seniors’ need for affordable transportation.
- x White Flight is reversing. Suburbs will see greater need for mass transit.



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### THE NEW ECONOMY ISSUES

- x Boardrooms locate at transit centers.
- x Push New Economy Firms to the airport transit centers.
- x Very little North Valley economy at all!
- x Few business clusters outside of Phoenix Downtown Area.
- x New Economy translates into more telecommuters & home-base businesses.
- x Develop communication source for home telecommute work.
- x Regional work force network.
- x In 20 years approximate 52 percent of the population will be either 0-19 years or 60 + years. That leaves less than 50% of populations to serve in work force- Will there be a shortage of workers? Increasing \$ Demand.
- x Retired/fixed income based on pensions created elsewhere.
- x R & D Industry/a Silicon Valley type economy.
- x Construction to satisfy retirement and fixed income.
- x Tourism (seasonal) 70 percent in winter 30 percent in summer.
- x Hotel, motel and travel services to satisfy seasonal tourism.
- x Expect high technology.
- x Expect/encourage environmental concern & awareness.
- x High-energy consumption.
- x Lack of workforce numbers.
- x Go to twenty-four hour economy. In the desert it makes sense to have work done at night.
- x Ability to meet the resource needs for a growing and more diverse population.
- x Equal balance of housing to employment – to include equal levels of housing – high/moderate/low income housing.



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## ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES ISSUES

- x More air pollution will have to be considered.
- x Water resources will have to be allocated; conservation is of great importance.
- x Energy resources will have to be considered alternative fuel- electricity.
- x Recreational areas have to be reserved for the enjoyment of future generations.
- x Wildlife habitats must be considered to be protected.
- x Government must set aside recreation & wild life areas.
- x Be practical, yet sensitive.
- x Highlight & reward environmental solutions.
- x At a neighborhood level – freeways are being built in urban areas, creating pollution and noise concerns. Accountability needs to be taken on these building freeways regarding disruption of communities.
- x Be sure open space is usable by all.
- x Be sure transit is useable.
- x Due to environmental issues; raw materials for infrastructure construction will become more expensive and scarce.
- x New development areas should preserve substantial areas of open/undisturbed lands of 25% or more.
- x Availability of water to support a growing population.
- x Availability of water in the event of a prolonged drought.
- x Availability of power resources for an increasing population.
- x Availability of adequate public safety resources.
- x Break with our petrol habit local action to promote cleaner transportation vital.
- x Environmental concerns will continue to grow.
- x Air quality improvements.
- x Open space preservation and increased recreational opportunities.
- x Adequate water supply is available in the near-term.







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**ENVIRONMENT AND RESOURCES ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

- x Growth and land use planning to consider resource constraints such as water.
- x Air quality can be cleaner if jobs are closer to housing (less driving).
- x There is an interest in preserving large tracts of pristine Sonoran Desert.
- x Sprawl helps create air quality issues, infrastructure difficulties (to provide).
- x Planning properly can provide alternative transportation which will preserve open space and air quality – bike trails, park-and-rides, etc.
- x Open space is key.
- x Land use preservations and conservation – “smart” homes, energy efficient, reuseable materials.
- x Air quality primary concern of residents – need education on actions each individual or family can take to improve air quality.
- x Job centers planned well in advance adjacent to transportation links with a mix of housing, services and jobs at buildout.
- x Incentives created to foster transit-oriented development.

**LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES**

- x Blending of open space into a growing community.
- x Continuity of roads, trails, transportation throughout the many cities of Maricopa County.
- x Maintaining community identity and culture in a growing and diverse population.
- x Ability to maintain the infrastructure during population growth even during emergency conditions.
- x The increase in land value will dictate greater density of housing development.
- x The crunch on transportation bottlenecks can be partially alleviated by:
  - \_ “Industrial & commercial corridors”; and
  - \_ Mass transit (light rail – people mover).
- x Infill, whenever possible.
- x Airships for cross-valley movement to large venues.





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**LAND USE AND URBAN DEVELOPMENT ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

- x Partnership with schools and employers.
- x Be sure that general planning is done in all cities.
- x Multi-use of public buildings.
- x Phoenix metropolitan area is auto-oriented. Accept it. Plan for it.
- x Today's futuristic thought towards tomorrow's needs – should be reevaluated every five years or so.
- x Development should not be governed by public vote.
- x Mass transit should be viewed as a service to the community - - - not a solution to an overcrowded transportation system.
- x Encourage housing near employment centers.
- x Regional perspective very important – Villages of Phoenix should work together more often.
- x Consistent land use plans and application of same.
- x Attraction of major regional employment a must versus density of various commercial businesses.
- x Transit centers provide the most intense densities within each jurisdiction.
- x Executive housing considered in each municipality's land use planning.
- x Mix of land uses (commercial, office, residential) should occur based on a justifiable form, based on local as well as regional concerns.

**TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES**

- x Ability to plan for the ever-changing technology of transportation and planning in such a way as to make the transition of new technology easier.
- x Ability to respond to radical, swift changes in methods of transportation.
- x Proper and various transportation is necessary to ensure level growth and development.
- x Limited access loops such as 101's, 202's, 303's.
- x [Need] strategic feeder routes.



- x [Need] cross-town expressways.



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**TRANSPORTATION AND TECHNOLOGY ISSUES (CONTINUED)**

- x Light rail train system from bedroom communities to industrial parks, airports & shopping malls.
- x Develop high-tech traffic plan.
- x Look to privatization to help funding shortfalls.
- x Balance geographic areas of transportation development.
- x Utilize technology to provide for better traffic flow patterns.
- x Split airport use; freight for Goodyear, passengers Sky Harbor.
- x West Valley East to West thoroughfare needed.
- x Many North Valley needs have not kept pace with local growth.
- x Very little transit (if any) currently in North Valley.
- x Suburbs must create intrinsic cores created on a regional perspective.
- x Regional commercial airports encouraged & subsidized.
- x Major transit centers planned in proximity to commercial airports.
- x If mass transit capabilities were quicker to reach destinations, more people would use.
- x More park-and-ride locations (with secure facilities) in outlying locations should be implemented.

**PART III. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION COMMENTS**

The following are issues that were identified by participants in an informal, roundtable discussion held during the North Valley Focus Group, regarding future transportation in the Valley.

- x Aesthetic issues for North Phoenix.
- x Long-term safety issues.
- x Government agency work with urban areas (need improvement/updating of established policies).
- x Break freight off to Goodyear.



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**PART III. ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION COMMENTS (CONTINUED)**

- x Figure out how to stop killing ourselves for conservation's sake.
- x Should have 24-hour economy - 3 million people all work within 24-hour window.
- x Need cleaner air (transportation issue).
- x Get ahead of curve (MAG and County) of transportation issues.
- x Reward positive development.
- x Funding big concern – mortgage our future (transportation) – need to catch up with the world.
- x Plan transit cores/stations ahead of time.
- x [Need] better development of urban core.
- x Get away from one central airport.
- x Population growth an issue – meeting transportation needs for diverse population.
- x Don't have solutions for growth (transportation – social-cultural diversity).
- x Growth issues – New River concern for future generations (air, transportation, recreation, social).
- x North Valley partnership goal – live, work, play within 10 miles.
- x Conserving open space [is a priority].
- x Petroleum better used for plastics – let's look at alternative fuel efficiencies.
- x City of Phoenix forcing us (developers) to do quality, sensitive projects.
- x Struggle: preservation vs. growth and development.

